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This publication is a planning guide for the formation of developmental reading programs in secondary schools. Developmental reading is not a remedial program for slow readers. Instead, it is a systematic instructional program to develop each student's attitude toward reading, his vocabulary and background concepts, his reading interests and tastes, and his reading independence.

The need for a developmental reading program in a secondary school can be accurately demonstrated through the use of test scores. Results of achievement, intelligence, and reading tests can be compared and evaluated to determine individual needs and overall program objectives. A reading coordinator should be engaged to direct a developmental reading program. The educational standards for professional training of these reading specialists are outlined in the guide.

The specific nature of a developmental reading program within a junior or senior high school may vary. Enrollment should be encouraged where not required by administrators. The reading coordinator, working closely with the teacher, should emphasize the reading skills of word recognition, comprehension, speed, and vocabulary. Mechanical devices such as the reading accelerator, the "Controlled Reader," and the tachistoscope are discussed as aids in developmental reading and are recommended for incorporation into an established program.

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1961

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Adel F. Throckmorton, Superintendent

Planning for Developmental Reading in Kansas Secondary Schools

1961

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Table of Contents

PAGE	
3	Introduction
4	Objectives of Developmental Reading
4	What Is a "Good" Reader?
5	Determining the Need for a Developmental Reading Program
5	Establishing a Developmental Reading Program
5	The Coordinator and His Responsibilities
5	Classroom Facilities
6	Initiating Instruction
6	Teachers' Share in Reading Development
6	Characteristics of a Good Program
6	The Reading Coordinator
7	The Teaching Program
8	Evaluation
8	Machines
9	Instructional Materials
10	Materials and Equipment Sources
10	Conclusion
11	Bibliography

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dr Developmental Reading in Kansas Secondary Schools

3.

Introduction

Developmental reading may be defined simply as reading instruction directed to all students, reinforcing and continuing instruction, adding more mature skills, and promoting the individual's independent reading habits for mental growth and leisure activity.

Developmental reading is not the remedial reading program designed for slow readers. Rather, it is intended primarily:

To help students acquire skill in different types of reading, from close, detailed reading to scanning.
To increase reading speed.
To improve comprehension of material read.

Many students build a good foundation in reading at the elementary level, but fail to develop their full reading capacities. Examples of students with competent mental ability but poor reading ability are all too frequent in the classroom. For effective reading, additional and more complex skills and reinforcement of basic skills are often needed by junior and senior high students. Developmental reading programs can help junior and senior high school students approach the realization of their full reading potential.

Thomas Carlyle said, "If we think of it, all that a secondary school or final highest school can do for us is still but what the first school began doing —teach us to read." In quoting Carlyle, Dr. Paul D. Leedy of New York University's Reading Institute, said "Carlyle set forth the obligation, in part at least, of the secondary school of today and tomorrow. When the student has been so educated that he can make the printed page deliver up to him its full meaning and purposes, then a secondary education has fulfilled its duty to him; for it has placed in his hands the universal key of all learning—the ability to read." [1]

1. Leedy, Paul D. "The Ability to Read," *Vital Speeches*. New York: City News Publishing Co., September 1, 1958, p. 695.

The reading accelerator trains students to read faster by promoting better reading habits.

4.

Planning for

Objectives of Developmental Reading

The goal of a developmental reading program is to teach young people who have learned the basics of reading how to become efficient, mature readers. Without help some will develop into fairly good readers; others will be hampered in school and on the job by lack of reading skills; very few will approach their reading potential.

Developmental reading is designed to accomplish the following objectives:

To develop in the student a positive attitude and approach toward reading.
To develop the student's vocabulary and background concepts.
To develop in the student reading interests and tastes.
To develop independence in reading.
To develop the student's ability to differentiate in reading purposes and in reading materials.

In developmental reading, systematic instruction is designed to help each pupil master skills he needs for effective reading. Evaluative tests and continual appraisal guide the specialist in tailoring instruction to individual needs. The program includes mechanical techniques and provision of varied materials for use in developing students' ability to read different kinds of material rapidly and with a high degree of comprehension.

What Is a "Good" Reader?

Reading is basic to school work, to all but the most menial types of employment, and to the enjoyment of a rich, full life. Improved reading benefits everyone, regardless of his intellectual or reading potential. A good reader has been well defined by Paul Witty. He listed the following characteristics of an effective, skillful reader:

The effective reader has an extensive vocabulary. He recognizes familiar words quickly and learns new words easily.

A free reading center in the reading classroom helps encourage positive attitudes toward reading.

He reads groups of words. He doesn't read words individually—and then put them together to make sense. He grasps phrases, even sentences, that express a complete thought.

The good reader reads a wide variety of printed matter. He reads magazines, newspapers, books. He reads poetry, plays, novels, short stories. He reads nonfiction articles and books on a wide range of subjects. His choice of reading matter is balanced, not limited to just one or two subjects.

The good reader adjusts his reading speed to his particular purposes. For recreational reading, he reads rapidly to get general ideas or impressions, or to follow plot. For study purposes—to remember details and main ideas, or to follow directions—he reads more carefully and slowly. He skims some materials—on the alert for specific information. He reads some material critically—weighing evidence, making comparisons.

The efficient reader is independent. He selects and locates material to fit his purposes. He knows how to use the library and various reference materials.

Above all, the good reader enjoys reading. Reading is . . . a convenient, essential tool for study and information. It's pleasurable, relaxing leisure-time activity.[2]

2. Witty, Paul. "Helping Children Read Better." Chicago: Science Research Associates, 1950, pp. 7-8.

Determining the Need for a Developmental Reading Program

Wherever students are observed reading, it is evident that some of them are having difficulty, and that the majority of them are not reading as effectively as they might. In junior and senior high schools, most teachers agree that they could teach more efficiently if their students could read better. Developmental reading programs at junior and senior high levels have been endorsed by educational authorities and, on a working level in Kansas, by boards of education, administrators, teachers, and parents.

James Conant has consistently advocated developmental reading for our nation's young people. In *The American High School Today,* he said,

> A school should have the equipment for a developmental reading program. The program should be available on a voluntary basis for all pupils in the school. The counselors and teachers of English should be asked to view this program sympathetically and to urge students to take advantage of the opportunity to increase reading speed and comprehension.[3]

The need for developmental reading in a school can be accurately demonstrated through the use of test scores. Guidance personnel can provide test data concerning the reading ability of all students. Results of achievement, intelligence, and reading tests can be compared and evaluated. With such information and teacher evaluation, individual needs and over-all program objectives can be determined.

3. Conant, James B. *The American High School Today.* New York: McGraw-Hill Co. Inc., 1959, p. 67.

Establishing a Developmental Reading Program

The Coordinator and His Responsibilities

The person who directs a developmental reading program is most accurately called a "reading coordinator." Some schools have used the term "reading specialist" or "reading instructor."

Schools' concepts of the structure of the developmental reading program and the reading coordinator's function may vary. In some schools the reading coordinator serves only as a consultant to teachers and does not directly instruct students.

However, the programming which has proved most effective and practical is having the reading coordinator work directly with students, teaching them, supervising their reading, measuring their progress, and judging their readiness for advanced reading development techniques.

Under such programming, other responsibilities of a reading coordinator might include consulting with teachers regarding skills designed to improve reading abilities of students in specific subject areas, giving inservice training to teachers, appraising available reading resources, selecting reading materials, organizing diagnostic and remedial materials, and keeping records and reports related to reading and the reading program.

For such a program a ratio of no more than 300 students to a coordinator is recommended.

Classroom Facilities

The space where the developmental reading program is conducted may be called "reading classroom," "reading laboratory," or "reading center." It is essential that it be a large classroom, equipped

with darkening blinds or curtains. Adequate storage space is needed for materials, equipment, and a collection of books for free choice reading. Developmental reading should not be attempted in crowded facilities, in the library, or in other dual-purpose rooms.

Initiating Instruction

Required enrollment in one basic developmental reading course at senior high level is recommended for all students whose test scores and teacher evaluations indicate a need. Voluntary enrollment is recommended at the junior high level and for advanced developmental reading in senior high school. Enrollment should be encouraged, however, especially among students who show promise of being greatly benefited by improved reading ability.

The coordinator will need to group enrollees into classes of approximately 20. Students' scores on tests of reading ability, mental ability, and interests form a basis for grouping, within the limits of class schedules.

Teachers' Share in Reading Development

A reading improvement committee might be appointed by the school administrator either to investigate the establishment of a developmental reading program or as a continuing group to serve in a liaison capacity between reading coordinator and teachers.

Teachers frequently are concerned with improving the reading abilities of their students in specific subject areas. Improvement in reading ability improves the ability to learn. Students can be helped to achieve more in subjects such as literature, mathematics, science, and social studies if instruction includes giving attention to the reading and study skills used. The nature of reading in one area may differ radically from that in another, so much so that ability to read well the material of one subject may not denote similar ability in other subjects.

The reading coordinator should maintain close contact with other teachers because they can contribute to the long-range goals of the program. Their support is essential to its success. In addition, they can build favorable attitudes toward reading by their selection of classroom instructional techniques and experiences.

Characteristics of a Good Program

The Reading Coordinator

As the need for developmental reading programs has been recognized, the demand for trained personnel in reading has increased tremendously. With the demand high and the supply relatively short, the danger of unqualified persons attempting tasks which only a trained reading specialist should undertake has become real.

Because developmental reading programs are still in early stages, the Kansas State Board of Education has not adopted standards for their operation in the state. Consequently, administrators

The reading coordinator should have available a wide selection of materials for students of varying interests and reading levels.

and school boards must exercise caution in selecting reading coordinators, to make sure persons they employ have adequate professional preparation and desirable personal characteristics.

The following standards for professional training of reading specialists have been established by the International Reading Association:

I. A minimum of three years of successful teaching and/or clinical experience.
II. A Master's Degree, or a Bachelor's Degree plus 30 graduate hours in reading and related areas as indicated below:
   A. A minimum of 12 semester hours in graduate level reading courses including:
      1. Foundations or survey of reading.
      2. Diagnosis and correction of reading disabilities.
      3. Clinical or laboratory practices in reading.
      4. Supervision and curriculum in reading.
   B. At least one graduate-level course in each of the following content areas:
      1. Measurement and/or evaluation.
      2. Child and/or adolescent psychology or development.
      3. Personality and/or mental hygiene.
      4. Educational psychology.
   C. The remainder of semester hours in reading and/or related areas. Recommended course content includes:
      1. Literature for children and/or adolescents.
      2. Organization and supervision of reading programs.
      3. Research and the literature in reading.
      4. Foundations of reading.
      5. Principles of guidance.
      6. Nature of language.
      7. Communications.
      8. Speech and hearing.
      9. Exceptional child.

The Teaching Program

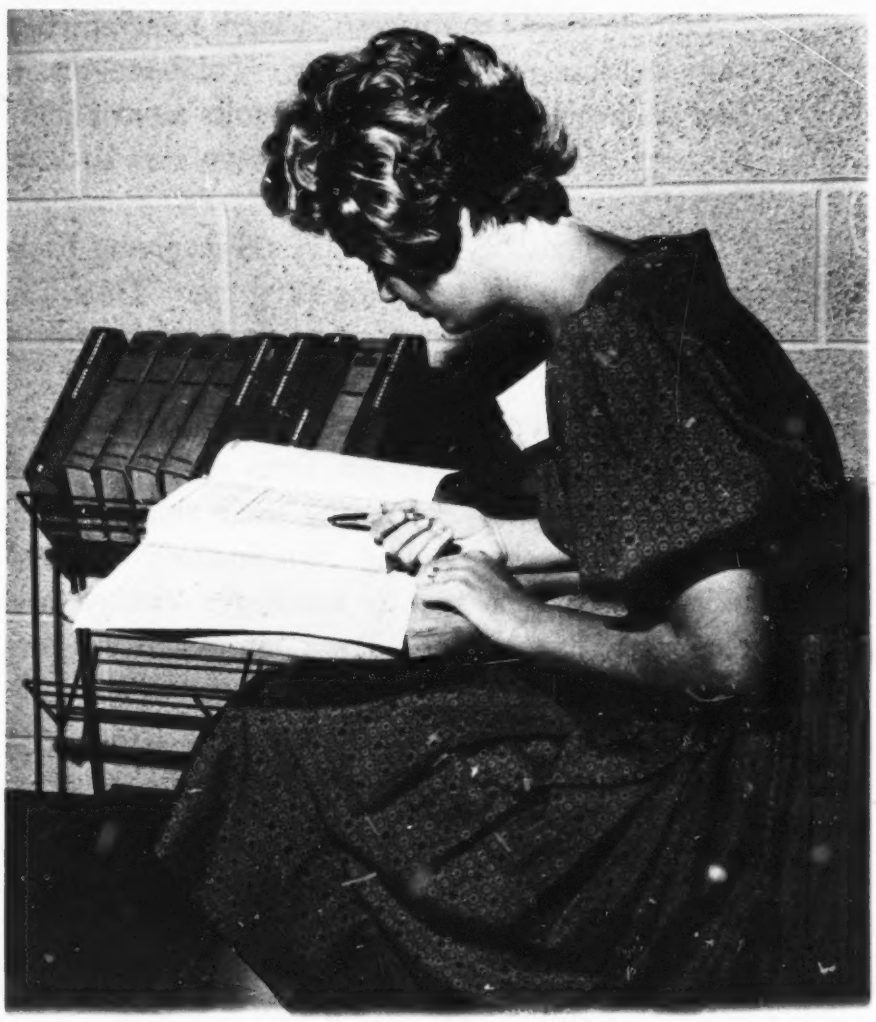
A qualified reading coordinator will be able to choose levels of instruction and instructional techniques to fit his carefully grouped classes. Several basic reading skills are the foundation upon which complex reading skills depend. The reading coordinator will emphasize these skills to the degree needed by each of his classes:

Word recognition.
Comprehension, vocabulary development.
Adapting reading rate to purpose.
Reading for temporary or permanent use.
Oral interpretation.

In most schools test results will show that many pupils, perhaps one-third, are in serious need of help with basic reading skills. Another third may need help with more advanced or complex skills. The top third may need only review and polishing of skills.

In the classroom the reading coordinator uses a variety of techniques, materials, and equipment to develop the reading abilities of his students. His schedule should also have some time set aside for individual conferences with students and for individual instruction.

As instruction progresses, a reading coordinator



Keeping their own progress charts makes students aware of their reading status and motivates them to improve.

Planning fo

Students with similar reading abilities practice together, using a "Controlled Reader."

will find results from preference records, interest inventories, and vocational inventories useful in:

Motivating students.
Selecting reading materials related to individual interests.
Making more accurate judgments of progress.

Evaluation

Standardized reading tests, administered at intervals, measure reading progress. Total progress is best determined by test-retest results from administration of equivalent forms of two standardized tests.

Mental maturity scores also aid in giving background for judging reading progress. They also give a basis for comparing reading improvement with the ability to improve.

The effectiveness of the entire developmental reading program is evident from enrollees' reading improvement, considering their ability to improve. It is the reading coordinator's responsibility to be sensitive to needs for change and responsive to the over-all program evaluation provided by students' test scores.

Illustration of students' progress is a strong motivational factor. Progress charts and evaluation cards can show changes in reading rate, vocabulary, and comprehension.

Machines

Mechanical devices are helpful in improving reading rate and comprehension. They help the student break bad habits associated with his reading and retrain him in habits which improve his reading ability. They are helpful in eye training and development of attention and concentration.

Machines are not vital to a successful developmental reading program. However, they have strong motivational appeal for students. In addition, there is usually an excellent selection of materials which accompany the devices. In the use of mechanical devices, emphasis should be on practice with many different types of reading materials.

The reading accelerator is used by an individual student with any reading material desired. Through silent mechanical action, a shutter travels down a page at an adjustable rate, tending to force the eye to keep ahead of it. The rate is selected by rotating a dial or setting a gauge. Most accelerators cover a speed range from less than 50 words per minute to more than 3,000. The reading accelerator also helps train the student not to look back and re-read, because the shutter prevents eye regression as it advances down the page, covering preceding lines.

The "Controlled Reader" projects stories from film strips, for groupings within a class, at speeds varying from 100 words per minute to approximately 800 words per minute. As students gain in rate of comprehension, they often reach plateaus at which they seem to make little further progress. Discouraged, they may relax their efforts until new motivation is introduced. The controlled reader is an excellent motivational device for students in this situation. The students can read stories at levels which push them slightly, thus improving

rate of comprehension. A booklet containing questions for each story is used to test students' comprehension. Scores can be recorded to observe progress.

The tachistoscope flashes symbols, letters, words, phrases, or sentences at varying speeds. It helps develop powers of attention, concentration, coordination, and quickness of perception. Its use also tends to widen the student's recognition span.

An indirect result from use of the tachistoscope is occasional discovery of visual problems. Students who show symptoms of eye strain or other difficulties should be referred for medical attention.

Instructional Materials

A number of good textbooks are available for basal and advanced developmental reading. A school may or may not select texts. However, a text is most often used for basal developmental reading. One which is used widely at present is *How to Become a Better Reader,* by Paul Witty.[4] Since pupils within any one class vary greatly in ability, the purchase of textbooks on different levels is desirable.

The reading classroom should be provided with supplementary books and reading aids to offer very wide reading experiences. Close cooperation should exist between the reading coordinator and the school librarian.

A reference section of the school library might be set up for the staff. The reading coordinator should also make available books and reading aids to help teachers with reading instruction. It is advisable for each teacher to have a book such as *Helping High School Students Read Better,* by Elizabeth A. Simpson.[5]

4. Witty, Paul D. *How to Become a Better Reader.* Chicago: Science Research Assoc., 1953.

5. Simpson, Elizabeth A. *Helping High-School Students Read Better.* Chicago: Science Research Associates, 1954.

Students develop ability to concentrate and increase their visual perception with a tachistoscope.

The "Reading Laboratory" is a collection of materials which can be used to great advantage. The laboratory includes for each lesson a rate building short story, a longer story for power or comprehension building, and material to be used in improving and building vocabulary.

Reading guidance booklets bolster confidence of students. These booklets, of short inspirational and "how-to" content, should be made available to all students who show interest.

Pocket books can also be made available to students on a loan basis. Often "getting started" is one of the problems of reading, and lending books from a shelf close at hand is of value. The library, in addition to its many regular activities, might sell pocket books of a worthwhile nature. Students should be encouraged to carry their books for free reading at all times.

Materials and Equipment Sources

A complete listing of the sources of materials and equipment for a developmental reading program is not possible in a publication of this type. On the following pages, however, a selected list is given. Coordinators and administrators will want to be sure that new sources and sources not included in this booklet are sought and utilized.

INSTRUMENTS

Craig Research, Inc.
3410 South LaCienega Blvd.
Los Angeles 16, Calif.

Keystone View Company
Meadville, Penn.

Audio-Visual Research Factory
Box 71
Waseca, Minn.

Psychotechnics, Inc.
105 West Adams St.
Chicago 3, Illinois

Science Research Associates
57 West Grand Avenue
Chicago 10, Illinois

FILMS—Audio-Visual Departments of the following:

Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Marquette University
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Purdue University
West Lafayette, Indiana

State University of Iowa
Iowa City, Iowa

PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES

Association

International Reading Association
5835 Kimbark Avenue
Chicago 37, Illinois

Colleges and Universities

Seven Kansas institutions of higher education offer facilities and training in developmental reading in the field of teacher training. The colleges and universities offer resources not only to their own graduates but for public school teachers in general. Information about the scope and availability of services may be obtained by writing the Director of Teacher Training at each institution:

Emporia State College, Emporia
Fort Hays State College, Hays
Kansas State College, Pittsburg
Kansas State University, Manhattan
University of Kansas, Lawrence
University of Wichita, Wichita
Washburn University, Topeka

Conclusion

Poor reading ability is an unnecessary waste of human talent. A developmental reading program is highly useful to those who take advantage of it. School boards and administrators who recognize its effectiveness are urged not only to make the program available but to assure its success by careful selection of a reading coordinator, adequate financial support of the program, and motivation of student participation by requirement or strong recommendation.

The "typical" reader can increase his reading speed by 20 to 25 per cent without loss of comprehension. This fact alone justifies including developmental reading, with effort toward increased speed and increased comprehension, in junior and senior high school programs. Reading more as well as better is a desirable goal for young people. Students who have developed skill to read with ease will enjoy reading and read more, consequently widening their interests and becoming better informed adults.

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